

## **What is claimed is:**

### **[Claim 1]**

A process for allocating a resource to a premium customer in a shared computing environment when a profiling tool indicates that the premium customer's available resource cannot provide an agreed service level, the process comprising:  
determining if the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource;  
responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, reallocating the resource to the premium customer;  
responsive to determining that the resource has not been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, determining if the resource has been allocated to a standard customer; and  
responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to a standard customer, re-allocating the resource from the standard customer to the premium customer;  
whereby a service provider can minimize a penalty for breaching the agreed service level.

**[Claim 2]** A data processing machine for allocating a resource to a premium customer in a shared computing environment, the machine comprising:

a processor;  
a memory;  
a service level agreement stored in the memory, the service level agreement setting a threshold performance level for the resource and a penalty for failing to meet the threshold performance level;  
means for causing the processor to measure the performance level of the resource; and  
means for causing the processor to compare the measured performance level with the threshold performance level; and  
responsive to determining that the measured performance level does not meet the threshold performance level, means for  
determining if the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource,  
responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, reallocating the resource to the premium customer,  
responsive to determining that the resource has not been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, determining if the resource has been allocated to a standard customer, and

responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to a standard customer, re-allocating the resource from the standard customer to the premium customer;  
whereby a service provider can minimize the penalty for breaching the service level agreement.

**[Claim 3]** A program, encoded in a computer-readable medium, for allocating a resource to a premium customer in a shared computing environment, the program comprising:

means for determining if the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource;  
responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, means for re-allocating the resource to the premium customer;  
responsive to determining that the resource has not been allocated to any customer that is not using the resource, means for determining if the resource has been allocated to a standard customer; and  
responsive to determining that the resource has been allocated to a standard customer, means for re-allocating the resource from the standard customer to the premium customer;  
whereby a service provider can minimize a penalty for breaching the agreed service level.